



Pre-load steel surveys

The London P&I Club's policy on pre-load steel survey costs has been reviewed following an extensive analysis of claims involving steel cargoes. The cost of conducting a hatch cover test will continue to be covered in full, but the new policy is that the Club will cover only 50% of the cost of cargo surveys, a development which reflects the common practice of Owners and Charterers sharing equally the pre-load steel costs. Cover for the cargo surveys will continue to be conditional upon a hatch cover test being conducted.

The previous approach to pre-load steel costs was developed in the late 1970s when cargoes presented for shipment were routinely in poor condition, but Masters were often put under pressure to accept LOIs for the issuance of clean bills of lading. At the same time, there was a high incidence of steel claims arising from water ingress through hatch covers. To address those factors, the Club agreed on an exceptional basis to allow Members to recover the cost of pre-load cargo surveys if the Member also arranged for a hatch cover inspection prior to loading. The costs of the hatch cover inspection were also agreed to be recoverable.

In recent years, the Club has noted an increase in the number of voyages in which steel was loaded at multiple (often three or four) load ports, which has driven up sharply the cost to the Club of the steel pre-load cargo surveys. A review of those files confirmed that the practice of offering steel in poor condition for shipment is no longer common. In other words, the Club was incurring increasing costs for a declining benefit.

However, a review of the hatch cover surveys has confirmed that there remains a clear loss prevention benefit to the Club. In 14% of the surveys, the ultra-sonic test revealed potential problems which were rectified prior to sailing. The effectiveness of the tests and prompt remedial action is evident from the absence of any claim arising from significant seawater ingress in the last five policy years.

To recap, the current position is that the Club will reimburse 50% of the costs of the pre-load steel cargo surveys if an ultra-sonic hatch cover test is also conducted. The cost of the hatch cover test remains covered in full. In many cases, the new arrangements will make little difference to the Owners as the practice of debiting Charterers for 50% of the pre-load survey costs has been commonplace for many years.

As always, any queries about the policy change can be addressed to LossPreventionDept@londonpandi.com



Ultrasonic hatch cover tests remain a significant loss prevention tool



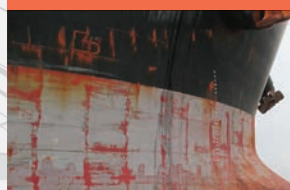
Cold rolled steel coils prior to shipment

IN THIS ISSUE

THE FULL PICTURE

ACCIDENT ROUND-UP

CLUB INSPECTOR





THE FULL PICTURE

Fixed and floating object damage – digital evidence

Experts need clear images to provide early remote assistance with incidents and the immediate actions required. Insurers need evidence of the alleged damage and the losses suffered.

This sounds obvious, but for many fixed object damage claims – broken fenders, concrete or pile damage, crane contact – there can be little for experts or insurers to go on, perhaps a quick sketch, a few pixelated images and a remarkably large bill for repairs and loss of use.

In many cases, it may not seem viable or practical to send an expert to site. This means the immediate task of collecting and preserving evidence lies with the Master and crew. Good photographs taken as soon as possible after the event are invaluable, especially when an apparently small incident starts to escalate into a major claim.

Good quality and appropriate photographs can easily be shared by email with a remote expert for instant advice on key issues. The expert can then identify where further detail might be useful, the signs of prior damage and perhaps dilapidation or poor design. These are important mitigating factors which may not be immediately obvious at the scene.

Even when an expert is despatched to site, he may take several days. In this time, important visual evidence can be lost or obscured. Ports are often keen to make temporary repairs, or the ship must sail to its next destination, leaving no second chances to take those all-important photos.

Quality or Quantity

These days, US\$100 buys a camera capable of storing and taking quality images. There is no need to compromise on quality or quantity. The bridge kit should include as a minimum:

- A digital compact camera with at least 8X optical zoom, built-in flash and video function
- Camera image quality of at least 10 megapixels
- Two 8GB or larger blank SD cards (preformatted) and checked for operation
- Spare battery pack
- Mains charger with ship-compatible plug

Many mobile phones can take good images too, but may suffer limitations, especially in poor light conditions. Mobile phone lenses are small which limits their optical quality. A mobile phone often sits in a pocket so the lens collects dust and dirt – none of which helps to take a clear photograph which may later be relied upon as evidence.

Be prepared

The camera should be kept on the bridge, fully charged with an empty storage card. Most cameras have an internal clock which should be checked and set to UTC. This time stamp is used when the image file is stored, essential when the chronology of events could be questioned.

Knowing how the camera works sounds obvious, but there is no time to read the manual or to learn the important features as an incident develops, or in the immediate aftermath. If in doubt, make sure the focus and zoom are set to fully automatic mode.

Keep focussed

Always check the photographs being taken are in focus. Vibrations, shaky hands and poor light can all result in fuzzy images. Where possible, set the shutter speed to the fastest possible for the light conditions. When auto-focus is used, make sure the right object is selected by the camera to focus upon. A simple camera clamp or tripod can help the image steady when there are vibrations.

By Mike Harrison
Solis Marine Consultants Ltd



A high resolution photograph, such as this 4608 x 3456 pixel resolution image (2.82MB file size) taken with a simple compact camera can be enlarged to A4 or greater paper size and reveals fine detail.



The same photograph with reduced resolution for a smaller file size and easier email will lose resolution and detail, making it less helpful for experts to advise and later evidence. If reduced size images are sent, always retain the original full size image for later use.



Over-exposed and under-exposed images also make detail difficult to see. Taking more photographs at different settings, avoiding the sun or bright sky in the background and using flash to enhance close-up details will create the clearest and most useful images.



Additional Safety Poster

The Club is delighted to announce that it has recently added a final safety poster design to the current range, on the subject of Manual Lifting Techniques.

The poster has been created in response to Members' requests for assistance with their safety initiatives on the subject and as a result of continued claims experience connected with injuries sustained as a result of such activities.



These posters are available in English and will be made available to all Members free of charge as usual.

Members should detail their requirements to publications@londonpandi.com



Club Inspector

Capt. Zarir Soli Irani, FIIMS



CONSTELLATION MARINE SERVICES LLC – DUBAI

With more than 26 years in the maritime business, Captain Zarir Irani believes that the age-old trait of “Listen – see – note down – speak only when spoken to and report promptly, honestly and independently” produces good results in the inspection and independent surveying profession, and is at the heart of Constellation Marine Services LLC’s (CMS) philosophy.

Captain Irani serves as a member of the board of directors at the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS) as the Institute’s Deputy Vice President, a voluntary role in which he feels it is his duty to participate, with the aim of improving professional standards in marine surveying worldwide.

Capt Irani comments: “Today, CMS is run and operated by a board of three non-executive directors, all of whom have been connected to the shipping industry through decades of surveying, salvage, legal and/or P&I club work experience.”

CMS has a staff of 21 full-time surveyors and another six consultants as the need arises for specialty work such as thermal imaging, rig moving or DP trials. It is one of the few

surveying firms in the region to have achieved integrated quality assurance standards of ISO 9001:2008, OSASH 18001:2007 accreditations, and environmental efficiency standards of 14001:2005. Ship inspection services for both attachment and loss prevention purposes is one of the core areas of strength of CMS in the UAE and Middle East region.

Captain Irani incorporated CMS in the Middle East in April 2007, and later established offices in London, Singapore and Gdansk. This year, he completed his 10,000th assignment in 11 years of dedicated surveying. He believes that sharing knowledge is the only way to enhance it, and speaking at the ICS mentorship programs, international conferences and seminars are some of the ways he does this.

“In line with the tradition of listening, nothing beats that “air time” one gets with clients, P&I Clubs and friends of the industry in the old-fashioned way of sitting across the table and asking important service-oriented questions,” Captain Irani believes. He says it is the cornerstone of operating a successful marine inspection and surveying organisation.

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION WORLD ROUND-UP

In this regular column, we round up some of the eye-catching accident investigation reports from around the globe:

MV Orakai and FV Margriet MAIB – United Kingdom

An investigation into a collision between a chemical tanker and a trawler off Ijmuiden, in which recommendations have been made with respect to lookout and the procedure for the relieving of the officer of the watch on the bridge.

[Click here to view report](#)

Anna Smile NTSB – USA

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the collision of the bulk carrier *Anna Smile* with the Louis Dreyfus Grain Elevator while docking was a lack of communication from the engineering staff to the ship’s bridge team and pilots while the ship was experiencing problems with the starting system of the main engine. Further highlighted factors included absence of specific procedures and training for emergency engine operations.

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Hudsonborg Dutch Safety Board – Netherlands

The investigation concludes that the chief officer onboard died having entered a cargo hold to take samples of a zinc concentrate cargo. The report considers that contributing factors included underestimation of oxygen depletion hazard and procedural inefficiencies.

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Lady Hester – SIA Finland

The dry bulk carrier *M/V Lady Hester* was on her way from the Port of Rauma to the Port of Halla in Kotka when she ran aground in the Ruotsinsalmi channel off Kotka. The investigation report considers that the Master became ‘overloaded’ in the absence of a dedicated lookout and/or helmsman among other factors.

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The London P&I Club



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